

Key Words in Writing Requests

COMPREHENSION		
WORD	EXAMPLE	WRITER RESPONSIBILITY
REVIEW	Review the events in the story.	List all the component elements of the plot in the order in which they occurred.
SUMMARIZE	Summarize the novel.	Condense the most important aspects of the novel in the order in which they occurred.
TRACE	Trace a character's development.	List the factors that led to a character's change throughout the story or novel.
	Trace Crane's use of blood imagery in <i>The Red Badge of Courage</i> .	Identify different blood images in the novel in sequence.
EMUNERATE or LIST	List at least four reasons Pip never suspects Magwitch of being his benefactor.	Order Pip's reasons concisely, one-by-one.
DESCRIBE	Describe Pip's behavior in London.	List the factors that characterize Pip's behavior, usually arranging the list from least to most important.
IDENTIFY	Identify the Globe Theater.	Answer the questions: who, what, why, where, when, and how.

ANALYSIS		
WORD	EXAMPLE	WRITER RESPONSIBILITY
DEFINE	Define the Puritan's view of Providence.	Classify by identifying the item to be defined with its group (a religious or philosophical belief), and differentiate it by providing the special characteristics that separate it from other items in the group.
ILLUSTRATE	Illustrate the characteristics of Naturalism as evidenced in American literature.	Use concrete examples of Naturalism to show its specialized characteristics. A writer may also need to provide a clarifying definition.
EXPLAIN	Explain why Huck Finn finally decided to "go to hell" and help Jim.	Make the subject clear by listing causes and effects of an idea or event.
COMPARE/CONTRAST	Compare and contrast the characters of Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer in the final chapters of the novel.	List all the similarities (compare) and all the differences (contrast), specifying the categories used to examine the subjects. Finish by suggesting how the analysis offers new insights into the items compared and contrasted ("So what?")
ANALYZE	Analyze the contribution of sound to the development of meaning(s) in Poe's "The Raven."	Identify the constituent elements (the parts) of a subject or event as they contribute to a single event.

EVALUATION/ARGUMENT/PERSUASION		
WORD	EXAMPLE	WRITER'S RESPONSIBILITY
PROVE (DEMONSTRATE, JUSTIFY, VERIFY)	Using at least three works of literature from at least two centuries, demonstrate that the movement from innocence into experience is a theme pervasive in American literature.	Establish that something is true by citing factual evidence or giving clear reasons.
INTERPRET	Interpret Macbeth's statement: "I have no spur to prick the side of my intent but only my ambitions..." etc.	List the possible effects, results or meanings of the event or idea, describing their relationship to the event and to each other. If a quotation, explain what the author meant in the context of the entire play.
EVALUATE, ASSESS, CRITIQUE	Evaluate the poetry of H.D. as an Imagist.	After describing evaluation criteria, list all elements of a subject that meet or fail to meet those criteria.
DISCUSS, EXAMINE	Discuss freewriting as an instructional tool.	Analyze the elements/values/use of the item under examination, evaluate them, decide on your position, and support it.